

Panther Found Guilty of Assault on Officer

Used Gun to Chase L.A. Lieutenant From Black Group's Central Ave. Headquarters

BY ROBERT RAWITCH 7/23/70

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Black Panther George Young was found guilty Wednesday of assault with a deadly weapon on a Los Angeles police officer. The finding was made by Superior Judge Alfred J. McCourtney.

The charge resulted from Young's chasing a police lieutenant from Black Panther headquarters on Central Ave. at gunpoint last Oct. 28.

Young was not arrested until Dec. 6, but a search warrant for the gun he used was one of the reasons given by police for simultaneous raids on three Panther headquarters Dec. 8.

A four-hour gun battle broke out at the Central Ave. headquarters between police and Black Panthers. Six Panthers and three police officers were wounded before the Panthers surrendered.

Appeal Pending

Eighteen persons were arrested in the three raids and were charged with conspiracy to murder police officers. The defense contends the search was illegal and the matter is now before the U.S. District Court of Appeals.

Dep. Dist. Atty. Ronald Carroll said Young's conviction substantiates the validity of the search warrants used in the three raids.

Incensed at the decision, which culminated three days of testimony, defense attorney Luke McKissack said, "The position of the Black Panthers must be that the last attempt to receive justice in the courts has passed."

"As their attorney I do not feel the climate of the times will allow a Panther to receive justice in the courts as they are now being manipulated."

Gun Not Loaded

The defense contended during the trial that Young had a right to use a gun because the police lieutenant, Ted Morton (since promoted to captain), was trespassing, the gun was not loaded and no actual assault was proven.

During the last day of the trial McKissack told the court that Morton was the provocateur and that, "It seems to me it was well within the bounds of what he (Young) has license to do."

McKissack added: "And if he had taken that gun and shot Capt. Morton and Capt. Morton was killed, I would have been proud to be standing by Mr. Young today."

He went on to say that he would not have been happy about the police officer's death, but that he hoped it would teach society a lesson so that such things wouldn't happen again.

Young is scheduled to return to court for sentencing Aug. 12. He could get up to 15 years in prison. McKissack said he planned to call for a new trial and will appeal Wednesday's decision.